A REVIEW OF THE Affairs of *FRANCE*:

With Obſervations on TRANSACTIONS at Home.

Saturday, July 28. 1705.

FROM the Conſideration of the moſt Ridiculous Banter the High Churchmen put upon themſelves, in crying out of the Church's Danger———Let me now, Gentlemen, Conſider the juſt *Antitheſis* the Caſe carries with it, to the Pretenſions made———In this I ſhall repreſent, not where the Churches Danger is not, but where it is, and call me what you pleaſe; and ſhew the ſame Wrath at the *Innocent Paper*, that you would at The, *in this Caſe*, as Innocent Author, were he again delivered into your Hands: It is all one, he has often Told you, his Pen is lifted in the Service of Truth; and as there ſhall be nothing but Truth, as near as he is able, in his Paper; ſo no Truth ſhall be ſo plain, ſo great, or ſo Terrible, but he will Dare to ſpeak it; and he Claims to be Judge of the Seaſon of it, becauſe he runs the Venture of the Conſequence.

To tell us of the Danger of the Church of *England*, from a *Proteſtant* Queen; a Queen ever Profeſſing, ever Practiſing, ever Piouſly Adhering to the Church of *England*'s Principles, has ſo much Contradiction in it, is ſo Rude and Abſurd, that it really Expoſes your own Party to the Ridicule and Contempt of the meaneſt People in the Nation.———And I'll tell you a ſhort Story, juſt happening upon the Spot on the Occaſion of Talking of this very Head, Writing this in the Houſe of a Friend, whether High-Church Malice had oblig'd the Author to Enter into ſome Debate about the Government, and the like, there happen'd to be *another Fool beſide your humble Servant*, I mean an Idiot, who hearing the Diſcourſe, ask'd preſently, If the Queen was *Turn'd Papiſt? Why ſo* Jack, ſays his Maſter? Becauſe *that Ugly Book*, ſays he, *tells you, ſhe is Wean'd from the Church: No*, Jack, ſays his Maſter, *the Queen is a good Churchwoman: Why then*, ſays *Jack, that Man muſt be a Fool, to think the Queen ſhould pull Down her own Church; for then ſhe muſt Tumble Down with it.*

Really Gentlemen, you must find out something more Plausible, or more Consistent with it self, than this; or else the *very Fools* in the Nation, will see through you; the Meanest People in the Nation, the most Common Understandings will Detect and Abhor the Absurdities of your Pretensions.

Till you can prove that the Queen has Chang'd her Religion; and is Turn'd *Quaker*, or some other sort of *Dissenter*; till you can make it out, That Her Majesty has left the Church of *England*, that my Lord Treasurer is Turn'd a *Dissenter*, and the Duke of *Marlborough* a *Dutch Calvinist*; you will never be able to give Colour enough to these Scandalous Suggestions, to cause them to move any Passion but that of Scorn and Contempt. The more the People hear of this Ridiculous Stuff, the more their Eyes must be Opened; and in time their Aversion to your Doctrine, so Encrease, that small Provocations may lead them to Treat you as you Deserve.

To tell us, the Church is in Danger from a *Protestant* Queen, from the Church of *England* Lords, who when ever she was in Danger, always Appear'd for her; who never Abandon'd her Communion, who have been in High Places of Trust now some time, and cannot be Charg'd with Attempting any thing to the Prejudice either of her Doctrine or Discipline; that have always been so Zealous for her Safety, that whenever she falls, they must fall too; this is such Nonsense, and serves so much to Expose the High-Church Sincerity, that even *the Fool*, the most Natural Idiot that thinks at all, cannot but take Notice of it.

That *no Men wish Evil as Evil to themselves*, is a Maxim, I think, no Man will Dispute with me; and here my Lords the Bishops come in for pulling Down the Church, tho' whenever it falls, they must be Buried in the Ruines of it, not as Men only, but as Bishops; for on which Hand can the Church fall, and they not fall under it?

If they Deviate into *Popery*, they fall as Men; for that other Titular Dignitaries wait the Possession of their Offices, as well as the Succession of their Church Lands, as the Hereditary Patrimony of St. *Peter's* Deputies, reverting to its rightful Possessors, from the Force and Interposition of almost 200 Years Usurpation.

If they Turn on the Left Hand to *Presbytery*, then they fall as Bishops; their Prelatick Authority Dies of Course, and the best Usage they could meet with, would be to stoop to the Mean Equality of Office with every Parish Priest.

To think these Men can be Instrumental to the Ruine of the Church, is

To conclude them all Fools, or Madmen.

1. Fools that do not know or understand their own Interest: Or,
2. Madmen, that knowing their Interest, act directly contrary to it, and pull themselves Down with their Own Hands.

Bless us all! That the Bishops should pull Down the Church, Lawn-Sleeves Destroy Ceremonies, Ecclesiastical Dignitaries, pull down Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction. This would be for the *French* King to pull Down Arbitrary Government, the Pope to Supplant Antichrist, and the Grand Seignior *Mahomet*.

If the Bishops could raise themselves from Doctors to Lords, from private Men to Peers in Parliament, from the Pulpit to the Throne; if they were to ascend from the Circingle to the Cope and Vestment, from the Altar to the Palace, from the Rectory to the Cathedral, there might be something of Probability urg'd in Defence of the Suggestion, and a Stranger would be a more indifferent Decider of the Controversie; there might be Reasons on both Sides, and the Debate remain unsettl'd and undetermin'd; some might be of this Mind, some of that, and it might lie as a *Moot Point*.

But when it is plain the Church can receive no Wound, but these very suspected Men must feel it; that it cannot fall without them; that with the Fall of the Church, these very Gentlemen must fall from the Prelate to the private Priest, from Lord to the Doctor, from the Peer to the private Man, from a high Station and Titles of Honour, to a mean and despicable Condition, to an Equality with the lowest of the Sons of the Prophets.

If

If these Gentlemen should combine to destroy or pull down the Church, what worse than Mad-men must they be call'd? What strange Ignorance must possess them? They must be Men of such weak undiscerning Faculties, that they cannot be fit to be put into such Posts in the Church; and their Intellects must be so weak, that really the Church can be in no Danger from them.

May the Church of *England*, never be in more Danger than she is in from her own Dignifi'd Clergy, her Mitred Leaders, the Bishops of the Church.

The Ridiculousness of these things is very agreeable to some of the other Inconsistencies of the Party; and 'tis a mighty Advantage to the Church of *England*, that all the Pretences of the present Enemies to her Peace, are built upon most Intolerable Absurdities, things that would make Fools laugh, Wise Men contemn, and their Friends wonder; Things that are false in Nature, as well as false in Fact; Things that not only are not, but cannot be True; and the Matter so gross, that the Understandings of the Meanest People are shock'd in the hearing.

It is a most Unaccountable thing, that these Gentlemen should bring all the Danger of the Church, from these Absurd Causes.

Had their Pretences been from the *Dissenters*, from the *Whigs*, that they were going to pull Down the Church, or that they were in Danger of the Church from her Old Antagonists the *Republicans*; the Cry might be something Rational, and the Clergy ought to be Excused for looking to themselves.

But to pick out Moderate Men, to single out Moderation, as the Enemies of the Church; to say, that the Men of Thought, Religion, Honour, and Piety, shall be the Men that Endanger the Church, these are Intolerable Things, Things that no Man can Defend, or take up the Cause of their Discretion.

So that nothing can Excuse, nothing can bring off the Party from the Eternal Scandal of Folly and K——ry.

Upon this Foundation, two Things will be Effectually brought to pass; *One is* the Ridiculous Banter of the High-Church Clamour at the Government and Ministry, concerning *this Imaginary Danger of the Church*, is sufficiently Exposed, the Bloody Flag is hung out in its proper Colours, the Scarecrow is stript of all its Disguises, and shown to the People; and the other is, That the real Ground of the Church's Danger is Detected and Discovered.

For after all, Gentlemen, I must Own the Church of *England* is in some Danger; the whole Talk of the Church of *England*'s Danger, is not such a *Chimera* as some People will have it to be, but the Great Debate will lie, Who is this Church in Danger of?

In running thro' the vast Number of the Church's real Dangers, the Description and Characters of her real Enemies ought to come in my way, and some Satyr might be their Due, as they come upon the Stage.

The Impotence of their Follies, indeed would merit such a Notice, but the Contradictions of their whole Management, are all of a Piece; to talk of the Danger of the Church from the Queen and Bishops, Ministers and Peers, is just like Mr. *L——sly* Defending the Church of *England*, and refusing to take the Oaths; the Church accepting the Assistance of one to plead for her, that will not accept of any Office under her, but believes her Schismatical, and in Rebellion against her Lawful Prince.

This is like a certain Gentleman's pretending to write *Gratis* meerly for the Good of that Church, and to receive no Gratuity, *&c.* on this Account; and a certain Clergyman, near the County of *Dorset*, who Own'd to have Collected near 100 *l.* among the High-Church Gentry, to make him a Present for his Good Service, since the Author must be a Lyar, or the Parson must be a Thief; for if the Author has not receiv'd it, the Parson has Cheated him of it; and if he has, then his former Allegation must be false.

These Shifts are they Driven to; to such a Refuge of Lyes, Ill Practices, and Prevarications do they fly; And what is the Consequence.

1. They Open the Eyes of the Blind.

2. They strengthen the Hands of the Church against themselves.

3. They

3. They Discover the Weakness of their Politicks.

4. They really put the Church into Danger. And,

5. They Expose themselves.

Some farther Explications of which Follies, may, perhaps, be Entred upon in our next; for in this Case the Mischief is Grown up to such a Heighth, that it must be allow'd Absolutely Necessary to search into the Bottom of it, and set Things in a True Light: That the Ignorant, for whom all these Snares are laid, may be Instructed, in order to their Deliverance from the Delusions of a Party.

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